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unfit to chant the holy office; we break, discharge, and expel them from the number of our chaplain choristers." Whether it is a general or a particular fact that married men have weaker voices than others, we will not stop to inquire, but merely observe that this unexpected and cruel resolution cost Palestrina a severe illness. His comrades in adversity, who had never been cordial with him before now, visited him and professed themselves his warm admirers. A pension of six crowns a month was conferred upon him, and with some reluctance continued, when in October, 1555, two months after his expulsion, he succeeded Luppachino as Maestro di Cappella to the Lateran Basilica. His emoluments in his best years were only nine crowns a month—and it was in extreme age that Pope Gregory XIV., moved to pity by his narrow circumstances, somewhat ameliorated them.

Among the beautiful compositions produced by him during the five years he held this appointment, are the *Improprii* of the Office of the Holy Week. He composed also many madrigals. It seems that he was too poor to publish his works at this time, but copies of them were made, and his fame became gradually diffused. On the First of March, 1561, he was translated to *Santa Maria Maggiore*, where he held the musical direction for ten years, the most brilliant of his life. The compositions which give occasion to the present biographical notice belong to this period. It would be interesting to know what influence his genius had on his famous cotemporary, Orlando di Lasso, who, for a time, held a similar appointment at Rome. He survived his old school companions, Animuccia and Nanini, and succeeded to their offices; but from 1571 his means were decreased by one-half. That his whole career was a struggle with want will be seen from an affecting passage in the dedication of the first book of his *Lamentations to Sixtus V.*—

Holy father, (he writes), study and cares never consort well. To ask more than competence is to want moderation and temperance; with it one may easily defend oneself from other cares, and whoever does not has only himself to blame. But those alone who have the experience can tell how hard it is to work to support oneself and one's household in credit; and how much such a necessity distracts the mind from the study of the sciences and liberal arts, myself has always had occasion to know, and now more than ever. However, I thank the divine goodness that, notwithstanding my greatest struggles, I have never ceased the study of music; and it has ever been a seasonable relief and distraction to me throughout the career I have run, which now approaches its termination. I have published a great many compositions, and the printing of others is only retarded by my poverty; for the expense of printing such large notes and characters as may be serviceable for use in churches is very great indeed.

This is the confession of a master whose works when once printed were multiplied in rapid editions. Without occasional help from dedications he would scarcely have been able to pub-

lish at all. Philip II. of Spain accepted the dedication of the first and second books of his masses, and Cardinal Hippolito D'Este that of a book of motets. Palestrina expired on the 2nd of February, 1594, fourteen years after his wife, the companion of his ill-rewarded career. His death-bed scene is fine—full of the visions of immortal fame. Having called his son, he said, "I leave you a great many unpublished works; thanks to the Abbé de Baume, to Cardinal Aldobrandi, and the Grand Duke of Tuscany; I leave you also the means of printing them, which I beg you to do as soon as possible for the glory of God and the celebration of his worship in his holy temples." He was interred in the Basilica of the Vatican, with great honours, and with the inscription "Musicæ Princeps" on his coffin.

The last work on which Palestrina was engaged was the revision of the chants of the Roman Gradual and Antiphony by desire of Gregory XIII. He associated with him his pupil Giudetti in this undertaking, which death interrupted before he had proceeded far. His son completed it, but a dispute arose as to the contract, and the MS. was lost.

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### Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

BRISTOL.—The Classical Harmonists' Society, to whom the public are indebted for several Concerts of first-rate excellence, performed Haydn's Oratorio, *The Creation*, on Monday evening, at the Victoria Rooms, to a crowded and fashionable audience, numbering from 1300 to 1400 persons. The principal singers were Miss Poole, Mr. Lockey, and Herr Staudigl. The band on the whole were equal to the task; there were a few deficiencies. The choruses, too, so important to the development of the libretto, were in good keeping—well balanced, and every point spiritedly taken up. Mr. P. J. Smith, the chorus-master, deserves great credit for having so well drilled his forces. The oratorio was led by Mr. H. C. Cooper, and conducted by Sir Henry Bishop, who appeared in the orchestra in his doctor's robes. The Classical Harmonists, it is to be hoped, will not be tardy in giving the public another such concert. We observed several of the visitors carefully tracing the music from Novello's small edition of this grand work.

A CURIOUS MUSICAL CONTRACT.—Haydn's genius made him a composer long before opportunity procured him the reward of his great talents. One of his earliest bargains, for the copyright of his compositions, was made with Forster, the violoncello maker. On that occasion, an agreement was entered into with the Count Von Sweiten, on the part of Haydn, with John Ashley, the elder, on that of Forster, couched in the following terms: "Whereas, Joseph Haydn, of Vienna, is about to sell certain musical compositions to William Forster, of London; and as the said Joseph Haydn is a composer of no celebrity, he agrees to furnish the said William Forster, with sonatas, quartets, and sinfonias at half the usual price that is demanded by authors of repute for such compositions."

## BRIEF CHRONICLE Continued.

**LIVERPOOL.**—A selection from Handel's oratorio, *Judas Maccabæus*, was given by the Festival Choral Society, at the Music Hall, on Tuesday evening week, to a full audience; and we were gratified to find that the suggestion we made some time ago, on the propriety of making a change in the solo department, was partially adopted on this occasion—the principal tenor being allotted to Mr. Ryalls. We hope that the success which this gentleman met with will induce the management to make the change general. The alto of Mr. G. Holden, jun., demands a change in this department, which we hope to see effected at the next concert. To our taste, a female voice is much better adapted for these parts. Mrs. Holden is entitled to commendable notice, but she is physically deficient for such great undertakings as "From mighty kings;" and her "Pious orgies" was mechanical and monotonous. The song, "Wise men flattering," the duet, "O lovely peace," and all the parts allotted to Miss Williams, were omitted, in consequence, we are informed, of that lady not being furnished with a seat in front of the orchestra. Mr. Armstrong's "Arm, arm, ye brave," and "The Lord worketh wonders," were the songs of the evening; they were given in his free, bold, and masterly style, and elicited the unlimited applause of the audience. Mr. Ryalls sang "Sound an alarm," a song peculiarly calculated to test a tenor voice, in good style, but it was rendered imperfect by the use of the head, or falsetto voice—the energy and fire intended by the very nature of both words and music being lost when the song is not energetically sustained by the chest voice. We would rather Mr. Ryalls dispensed with the shake altogether, than persist in it against rule; for although it may in some cases be considered an evidence of the ability of the performer, it proves the reverse when executed on the wrong notes. The choruses were, for the most part, well sung, "O Father, whose almighty power," meeting with a hearty encore; and the band was numerous and excellent.—*Liverpool Journal*.

**MARTOCK.**—A Choral Society has lately been formed here, under the direction of Mr. E. Thorne, which we believe will be well supported.

**CECILIAN SOCIETY.**—This old-established and respectable association of amateurs—whose disinterested exertions in the cause of music we have had frequent opportunities to record in terms of eulogy—is progressing with increased prosperity,—the number of its subscribers having recently been considerably augmented. This may, doubtless, in a great measure be ascribed to the ability and exertions of its secretary, Mr. Murdoch. The performances now take place on the first Thursday in each month, instead of the second and fourth, as heretofore; an arrangement which affords an opportunity to the members for rehearsals—the benefit of which is apparent. Haydn's oratorio, *The Creation*, was performed on Thursday, the 2nd instant, supported (with one exception) entirely by the members of the society—Messdames Hayes, Bowden, Jennings, and Dyer; Messrs. Cross, Gadsby, Nelson, Walker, Godfrey, and Montague, the last of whom gained a rapturous encore for his chaste and expressive rendering of the solo, "In native worth." Miss Bowden, in the air, "With verdure clad," evinced the possession of a good voice, and considerable taste; Miss Hayes, who gave the recitative and air, "On mighty pens," is a young vocalist of much promise, the duet by this lady and Mr. Cross, "Graceful consort,"

was exceedingly well rendered. Misses Dyer and Jennings also sung with good discretion—the former assisting in the duet commencing "Of stars the fairest," the latter singing the air, "The marvellous work." Mr. Cross was perfectly successful in the treatment of the bass recitative in the first part of the oratorio; his voice told well in the air, "Rolling in foaming billows." Mr. Walker's version of the solo, "In splendour bright," was exceedingly commendable; a compliment equally deserved by Mr. Nelson, in "Now vanish;" and Mr. Gadsby sang "Now heaven in fullest glory," with musician-like feeling. The choruses were generally well rendered; the orchestra was ably led by Mr. Woollard. Mr. Walker conducted. Mr. Peck presided at the organ.—*Dramatic and Musical Review*.

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